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AUTHOR	Soldwedel, Bette J.
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ABSTRACT

This document, one of four staff training units in a series designed to attack problems of sex bias in the counseling of women and girls, is intended to help counselors and counselor educators consider their knowledge of and attitudes toward the sex-limited status of women. In this unit, a staff training workshop strategy is presented to increase counselors' sensitivity to the: (1) development of career aspirations among girls and women: (2) force of sex-role socialization on occupational choice: (3) need to identify and eliminate sex-role stereotyping in career guidance: and (4) need to assist girls and women in the development of career plans congruent with their capacity to achieve. Workshop objectives, competencies, preparation, procedures, and time requirements are listed. Examples of pre-tests, readings, and competency checks for workshop participants are also provided. (Author/NRB)

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ERASING SEX BIAS THROUGH STAFF TRAINING

UNIT IV: SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

by

Bette J. Soldwedel, Ed. D.
Professor of Education

University of North Florida
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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ERASING SEX BIAS THROUGH STAFF TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

As the struggle of women to achieve equal education and equal employment opportunities has intensified during the last decade, the need to directly confront prevailing sexist attitudes in the United States culture has become apparent. Of particular consequence are the biased attitudes of teachers, counselors, and school administrators who have a direct influence on the way boys and girls come to think of themselves, on the way high school students make decisions about careers and post-secondary education, on the way young men and women in schools and colleges view their roles in the adult society.

Counselors, in their work with students in small groups or as individuals, have a great opportunity to influence evolving perceptions of self among girls and boys, women and men. Yet counselors themselves may bring to their professional work those sex-role stereotypes which reflect their own socialization.

Four staff training units have been developed as a part of the series of publications ERASING SEX BIAS THROUGH STAFF TRAINING, designed to attack problems of sex bias in the counseling of women and girls. These four units, each of which contains workshop strategies, have the following themes:

WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT - designed to increase counselors' knowledge of (1) myths and stereotypes surrounding

women as workers; (2) facts related to participation of women in the labor force; (3) internal and external barriers to women's achievement in the world of work; (4) factors that influence career decisions among girls and women.

EDUCATION OF WOMEN - designed to increase counselors' knowledge of (1) the status of women in education as a profession; (2) sex-stereotyping practices in education; (3) support systems to combat sex-role stereotyping; (4) methods to identify and eliminate sex-role stereotyping in educational policies and programs.

SEX STEREOTYPING: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS - designed to increase counselors' sensitivity to (1) the limiting nature of sex stereotyping in the society of America; (2) the influence of cultural expectations on the development of aspirations among children and young adults; (3) the need to identify and eliminate sex-role stereotyping in counseling practices and processes; (4) the need to assist girls and women in the development of self-concepts congruent with their full potential.

SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS - designed to increase counselors' sensitivity to (1) the development of career aspirations among girls and women; (2) the force of sex-role socialization in occupational choice; (3) the need to identify and eliminate sex-role stereotyping in career guidance practices and processes; (4) the need to assist girls and women in the development of career plans congruent with their capacity to achieve.

Counselors, and the counselor educators who prepare them for the profession, have an obligation to be knowledgeable about and sensitive to the changing roles of women in the United States. Their work with girls and women must show recognition of the "second revolution" as described in the frontispiece of the report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

> The second (revolution) is now occurring as women, no longer so concentrated on and sheltered for their child-bearing and child-rearing functions, are demanding equality of treatment in all aspects of life, are demanding a new sense of purpose.

UNIT IV

SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

UNIT IV

SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

OBJECTIVES

. To increase counselors' sensitivity to the development of career aspirations among girls and women.

. To increase counselors' sensitivity to the force of sex-role socialization on occupational choice.

. To increase counselors' sensitivity to the need to identify and eliminate sex-role stereotyping in career guidance practices and processes.

. To increase counselors' sensitivity to the need to assist girls and women in the development of career plans congruent with their capacity to achieve.

WORKSHOP

SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

COMPETENCIES

1. Counselors will be able to describe socialization processes which contribute to sex stereotyping.

2. Counselors will be able to cite relationships between educational choices and later career options.

3. Counselors will be able to specify at least two strategies to assist girls and women in realizing their career potentials.

PREPARATION

1. DUPLICATE COPIES OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FOR WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

   a. Pre-Test: OPINIONNAIRE ON WOMEN

   b. Reading: SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

   c. Competency Check Exercise

2. OBTAIN NEWSPRINT AND POST, IN ADVANCE, IN THE WORKSHOP MEETING ROOM.

   Allow sufficient writing space to display participants' reponses to the pre-test Opinionnaire on Women (at least twenty sheets).

PROCESS

1. Explain the purposes of the workshop:

   TO INCREASE COUNSELORS' SENSITIVITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER ASPIRATIONS AMONG GIRLS AND WOMEN.

   TO INCREASE COUNSELORS' SENSITIVITY TO THE FORCE OF SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION ON OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE.

   TO INCREASE COUNSELORS' SENSITIVITY TO THE NEED TO IDENTIFY AND ELIMINATE SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING IN CAREER GUIDANCE PRACTICES AND PROCESSES.

   TO INCREASE COUNSELORS' SENSITIVITY TO THE NEED TO ASSIST GIRLS AND WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER PLANS CONGRUENT WITH THEIR CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE.

2. Distribute copies of the pre-test: OPINIONNAIRE ON WOMEN.

   Allow 5-10 minutes for the participants to complete the pre-test.

3. ASK PARTICIPANTS TO SCORE THEIR OWN RESPONSES AND COMPUTE A TOTAL SCORE.

   2 points for each "Strongly Agree"
   1 point for each "Agree"
   0 points for each "Uncertain"
   -1 point for each "Disagree"
   -2 points for each "Strongly Disagree"

   Maximum total scores are + or - 20

   SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING INTERPRETATION OF SCORES:

20	-	extremely positive toward equality for girls and women
10-19	-	generally positive toward equality for girls and women
1-9	-	somewhat positive toward equality for girls and women
0	-	ambivalent about equality for girls and women
-1-9	-	somewhat negative toward equality for girls and women
-10-19	-	generally negative toward equality for girls and women
-20	-	extremely negative toward equality for girls and women

INVITE PARTICIPANTS TO EXPRESS FEELINGS ABOUT PRE-TEST ITEMS.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO POST EXTREMES OF OPINIONS ELICITED FROM THE GROUP DISCUSSION FOR EACH OF THE PRE-TEST ITEMS.

FOR EACH ITEM, ASK ONE VOLUNTEER "SA" AND ONE VOLUNTEER "SD" TO ELABORATE THEIR OPINIONS. At this point, do not invite additional comments or statements of opinion. The object is to display for participants the extremes in opinions on women's issues.

After extreme positions have been posted for each of the ten items, ASK PARTICIPANTS TO IDENTIFY, BY RANK ORDER, THE ITEMS THEY ARE INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING FURTHER. By a show of hands, determine the interest, by rank order, in each item. INVITE COMMENT ON THE MOST POPULAR ITEM. ENCOURAGE EXPRESSIONS FROM BOTH "AGREEs" and "DISAGREEs".

ASK A VOLUNTEER "U" TO SUMMARIZE THE DEBATE ON THE ITEM AFTER ABOUT 5 MINUTES. (If there are no volunteer Us, ask for a volunteer from the total group.)

POST THE GIST OF SUMMARIES ON NEWSPRINT.

Move on to the next most popular item and repeat the procedure until all items have been discussed.

Make summarizing remarks to reiterate the need for counselors to be aware of their own strong biases and to be sensitive to the impact of their biases in counseling and guidance practices.

Allow a minimum of 60 minutes for the Opinionnaire discussion. Depending on the interests of the participants, discussions can be extended.

NOTE: Workshop leaders may want to collect opinionnaires in order to compute group ratings for each of the items. In that case, ask participants to identify their sex by placing an "F" or "M" in the top left corner of the Opinionnaire.

4. Introduce Reading: SEX STEREOTYPING - CAREER POTENTIALS

ASK PARTICIPANTS TO READ THE MATERIAL CAREFULLY BEFORE THE NEXT WORKSHOP.

SPECIFY COUNSELOR COMPETENCIES TO BE ACHIEVED:

Be able to describe socialization processes which contribute to sex stereotyping.

Be able to cite relationships between educational choices and later career options.

Be able to specify at least two strategies to assist girls and women in realizing their career potentials.

5. Provide a mini-lecture on the reading SEX STEREOTYPING - CAREER POTENTIALS to stimulate further interest in the subject.

   Allow about 10-15 minutes for your presentation.

6. Give participants an opportunity to comment on the workshop objectives and process.

   INVITE PARTICIPANTS TO DESCRIBE THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE WORKSHOP INCREASED THEIR SENSITIVITY TO SEX-STEREOTYPING PROBLEMS; THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE WORKSHOP INCREASED THEIR SENSITIVITY TO THEIR OWN BIASES.

   Allow about 15-20 minutes for the discussion.

7. Distribute copies of the Competency Check Exercises. Ask participants to complete the Competency Check and to invite a peer to evaluate the degree of success achieved in acquiring competencies.

8. Summarize workshop activities and relate remarks to the objectives of the unit.

TIME: 2 HOURS

WORKSHOP

SEX STEREOTYPING
CAREER POTENTIALS

Pre-Test

OPINIONNAIRE ON WOMEN

Read each statement. Decide whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are uncertain (U), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD). Write your decision on the line to the left of each statement.

_____ 1. Women shouldn't have to wait to go to work until their children are grown.

_____ 2. Women should be encouraged to pursue non-traditional careers such as engineering, law, computer sciences.

_____ 3. Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment would benefit all Americans.

_____ 4. A woman's place is in the home only if she wants to be there.

_____ 5. Women have not achieved in the world of work to the same extent as men because of sex-role stereotypes held by employers and male workers.

_____ 6. Men should be willing to serve as mentors for girls and women.

_____ 7. Textbooks and school practices should be monitored regularly to ban sexism and sex-role stereotyping.

_____ 8. Girls in school should be actively recruited to enroll in mathematics and science classes.

_____ 9. It's as natural for women as it is for men to be ambitious for success and advancement.

_____ 10. If you had to have an operation, you would be just as confident to have a female as a male surgeon.

READING

SEX STEREOTYPING: CAREER POTENTIALS

The erector set-nurse's kit diversions of childhood have taken their toll on countless girls and women, boys and men who were "taught" to think that occupations especially earmarked for women and for men actually existed. Those messages are learned early and well. Juliet V. Miller (1978), reporting on data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress Career and Occupational Development studies, found stereotypes already internalized among nine-year-old children. There were consistent trends for female nine-year-olds to score higher and male nine-year-olds to score lower on household cluster skills. She found that by age 9, for example, 73% of the girls had ironed clothes; 42% of the boys. When maintenance-building skills were examined, the trend was reversed. Boys consistently scored higher than girls. Eighty percent of the boys, but only 45% of the girls, had built something from wood. When the 13-year-old population was asked to name occupations which they were considering for the future, females were much more prepared than males to name jobs, and their choices followed stereotypes: teacher, educator, librarian, nurse, office worker. (Aubrey, 1978)

Counselors and counselor educators have the opportunity to function as significant "agents of change," in a very real sense, as they work with youth to free themselves of cultural conditionings which limit their career potential.

The Magnitude of Stereotyping

Education and training have steered women, as girls, away from subjects which eventually lead to traditionally male careers. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973) views the problem as so significant that it lists the following as the number one priority:

> The first priority in the nation's commitment to equal educational opportunity for women should be placed on changing policies in pre-elementary, elementary, and secondary school programs that tend to deter women from aspiring to equality with men in their career goals. (p. 56)

Tibbetts (1979), in an extensive review of the literature, identifies factors that affect women's choices of career roles: sexist socialization of both males and females, less encouragement, outright discouragement - which has the effect of women internalizing their "inferiority," fear of rejection, and the so-called motive to avoid success. She discusses other elements that relate to career potentials: sex typing of jobs, negative concepts of a "woman boss," lack of support from male peers, lack of an "Old Girl" network, pay discrepancies between men and women, and prejudicial evaluations. She concludes:

> When one considers the factors that can affect a woman's choice of a career role, it should be clear that one cannot dismiss the apparent lack of feminine ambition by indicating that the responsibility for her own motivation lies with the woman. To do so is to ignore the sexist socialization which has taught both males and females that women are incompetent to lead. One cannot say that a

> woman who elected not to apply for a leadership position has chosen freely. Her options have been made clear to her by a society that has selected them for her. (p. 9)

Educational Choices and
Effects on Career Options

Harway and Astin (1977) point out relationships between educational choices and later effects of these choices on career options open to both women and men. They analyze the available data on high school preparation, college enrollments by major field of study and attainment of degrees. Among their observations and conclusions are the following: (1) channeling, at the high school level, into courses which are traditionally sex stereotyped (such as English and foreign languages for girls; mathematics and sciences for boys) results in a narrowing of options for women, limiting them to traditionally "female" fields; (2) choice of a college major closely corresponds to the traditional "male" and "female" occupations; (3) affirmative programs for girls and women (such as high school level recruitment of girls for tutorials or remediation in mathematics and sciences; recruitment of girls to enroll in advanced mathematics and science courses) should be initiated to overcome stereotypes as girls and women make educational decisions affecting career options. (36-60)

G. F. Epstein and A. L. Branzaft (1974) studied aspirations of freshmen women toward careers and found that 52% hoped to have careers, but the overwhelming occupational choice was "teacher." In addition, few

indicated that they aspired to post-baccalaureate education. Moore and Veres (1976), in a study of traditional and innovative plans among two-year college women, found that role innovativeness was expressed by only 20% of the sample. They also report that over 40% of those who planned to work continuously also plan to marry and have a family of two or more children. Almquist (1974) studied sex stereotypes in occupational choice among college women. She found that women who choose male-dominated occupations differ from women who select feminine occupations. The differences were notable in the areas of family influence, work values, work experience, role model influences, and, to some extent, in the influence of collegiate activities.

Epstein (1970) asks: "Why (do women typically fail) to fulfill their promise -- especially when that promise has been made explicit by liberal tradition and education?" (p. 3) She goes on to point out that "our best women -- those in whom society has invested most heavily - under-perform, under-achieve, under-produce." The answer, she feels, lies in the contradictory and ambiguous cultural expectations of women which are at least limiting and at worst sources of considerable strain. The American girl is faced with an image of the ideal woman which includes attributes of personal warmth and empathy, sensitivity, and emotionalism, grace, charm, compliance, dependence, and deference. At the same time, she is faced with the All American values of equality, achievement, and full self-development. The career woman, Epstein observes, faces conflict in that the attributes considered successful in professional

> importance of mathematics as a background, not only in engineering and the natural sciences, but also in other fields, such as the social sciences and business administration. (p. 57)

The Commission also notes:

> From the age of about 15, or perhaps earlier, every young woman becomes aware of the personal conflicts that must be resolved over the relative roles that marriage, motherhood, and career are likely to play in her future. As she attempts to work out these conflicts, counselors can perhaps be most helpful in encouraging her to aspire to a career that is consistent with her abilities. (p. 47)

Women's goals and aspirations are indeed changing, and they are reflected in new trends observable in the educational choices they are making. An Associated Press story recently released (June 18, 1980) reports on a new Census Bureau study. The study shows a shift of women away from traditional "female" fields, such as education, and toward a new emphasis on business. The study notes that "between 1966 and 1978, the number of college women majoring in business jumped 300 percent, from 204,000 to 819,000." This increase represents a shift in the proportion of women students majoring in business (from 9% to 17%) and a decline in the number of women majoring in education (from 33% to 13%). The news release also states that women are increasing their numbers in other nontraditional fields such as geology and engineering. In the face of that positive report, it is discouraging, however, to read that:

> Reflecting the trend among all students, the number of women studying mathematics and statistics declined.

The Census Bureau found that women increased their numbers in the physical sciences but also in the traditionally "female" subjects of social sciences, English, journalism, and the humanities.

Thoughts on Counseling Girls and Women

Cynthia Fuchs Epstein (1975) suggests that women be assigned "sponsoring professors who will be responsible for their advancement and have a vested interest in their survival." She suggests that they ought to be denied grants unless they are training women students as well as men. (p. 11) Adopting her idea, perhaps counselors should be held responsible for decisions made in the selection of programs of study; decisions which hold open a variety of career options for both girls and boys! Perhaps they should be required to submit semester reports on the numbers of girls they have recruited for mathematics, science, and traditional "male" trades programs. As Fuchs suggests: "Let's motivate the gatekeepers to bring women in."

Counselors need to be agents of change. They must insure that limitations are not placed on the range of opportunity for learning made available to girls and women. If one accepts the notion that the human mind knows no boundaries except as boundaries are imposed by opportunity or lack of it, then it is clear that the chance to learn is basic to the ability of any individual - girl or boy, woman or man - to ever come close to realizing full

career potentials. Girls, as well as boys, should be encouraged to pursue mathematics, science, mechanical drawing. Children in elementary schools should be encouraged, by exposure to classroom instruction and counseling, to explore all basic educational subjects, and they should be helped to remediate - immediately - when their achievement falls below acceptable norms.

Counselors can provide both wise counsel and good advice. Girls and women need to be challenged about their attitudes toward themselves as potential workers when those attitudes reflect fears of failure, fears of success, or assumptions about "a woman's place."

Girls and women need a counselor's help in assessing their skills and interests. They need help in relating their skills and interests to a wide range of future occupations, both traditional and non-traditional.

Girls and women need facts about the world of work on which to base decisions, and counselors can help them acquire new knowledge about the vastness of the career options open to them.

Leona Tyler (1972) summarizes all of the issues involved in counseling and guidance as she remarks:

> What we must do in counseling women and girls is to open up for them ways in which they can make a maximum contribution. The right we must insist on above all others is the right to contribute, or, to put it more specifically, the right to make a first class rather than a second-class contribution. (p. 96)

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COMPETENCY CHECK EXERCISES

Complete one of the following activities and invite a peer to evaluate the degree of success you have achieved in acquiring competencies discussed in this unit.

1. Outline special guidance materials or instructional strategies for use in elementary schools to offset socialization processes which contribute to sex stereotyping.

2. Design a unit of instruction for secondary schools to help girls increase their appreciation of dual roles: family and career.

3. Outline special guidance strategies to increase the interest of elementary school or secondary school girls in non-traditional careers.

4. Design a course for counselors on the subject of counseling girls and women.

5. Outline counseling strategies to free girls or women from stereotypes which inhibit their full self-actualization.